10: Linton E-5 (1920-1921)1939
OX6 Marquesas OX6

formal marriage of this sort. The ordinary marriage involved no ceremony or gift exchanges and was merely the selection of a permanent partner by the eldest child as the hereditary household head. Unmarried individuals then attached themselves to these households in subsidiary positions. Because of the shortage of women, almost every girl had an opportunity to become the head wife in a household. Only rich households had subsidiary wives. Monogamous marriages occurred only among the very poor or in rare cases of strong personal attachment.

Old age brought no prestige in the Marquesas, and respect for parents was impossible in a society where a man was outranked by his son at birth and merely acted as regent until the child was old enough to marry. The high point of life for the Marquesan came during his years as active head of the household. The only people who remained important in old age were the inspirational priests. Ceremonial priests, when they became too old to officiate actively, had to give up their positions. The old women carried on most of the woman's work in the house, while the young women entertained the men; old men could always find odd jobs to keep themselves occupied. The old were neglected but were never killed or mistreated for fear that they might take revenge later, when they became ghosts.

There was very little quarreling among the Marquesans, and that only when they were drunk. Theft of food was not infrequent but was not seriously regarded. The owner of the food would be irate and would punish the thief if he could catch him, but the man who got away with the theft successfully would boast about it later when the owner's annoyance had had time to subside. There was practically no theft of anything except food, probably because all household objects were individually made and decorated so that the stolen article would be promptly recognized. There were some killings, almost invariably for only two causes: sexual jealousy during drunkenness, and revenge, usually by sorcery, for previous killings. The Marquesans had no form of legal procedure in handling crime. Each household was supposed to take care of its own interests.

/22 cont./
the behavior of others. Mutual masturbation occurs in these gatherings; and some homosexual activity may begin at this time, although it is uncertain. 837 8CA [837]

At the age of approximately 7 years other forms of group sexual activity appear, which are heterosexual. Boys and girls, playing at "mother and father," will often place their genitalia in contact for /23/ brief periods. The girl either stands against a tree or lies supine on the ground, with the boy assuming the normal position for coitus. Contact is brief, accompanied occasionally by pelvic movement. This activity is carried out with much laughter, in isolated areas where adults will not be apt to surprise the gathering.

Adult disapprobation of masturbation and the other group activities among children is apparently feared. The error lies in being so inept as to be caught at any of these activities, however, rather than in the activity itself. There is no folklore concerning deleterious effects of masturbation or homosexuality. It is merely considered shameful to allow adults to witness these acts, however natural they might be. Furthermore, much of the disapprobation of such acts is feigned, especially where Europeans are present. Disapproval is expected as "the thing to do."

During childhood, Marquesan children of both sexes are given jobs and responsibilities which increase as they grow older. Caring for children occupies a great deal of time for young girls. Girls are also expected to help with cooking, laundry and general maintenance around the house. Girls also collect shellfish along the beaches, and line-fish for sardines and other small fish in the bay. They are taught crafts, such as sewing and basketry. Both sexes help in the care of livestock: watering and tethering horses, and feeding pigs, goats and chickens. These jobs are usually handled in a routine, with the animals being /24/ served at the same time each day, usually early in the morning and again at dusk. 866 868 859

Boys help in the manufacture of copra and in gardening tasks. They also are expected to handle the more strenuous tasks, such as collecting coconut drippings for contraband [273]

/24 cont./ 868 882 857 [273]

alcohol, or aiding in construction jobs. They are taught fishing techniques, woodworking and hunting. Instruction in most cases is entirely informal, by example rather than precept.

Loose groups form during childhood, consisting of children of the same sex and approximately the same age. 857 These groups fluctuate in size, splitting or merging, but attachments formed at this stage are life-long, generally. The groups often serve as work groups -- for example, a group of boys will go off together to change the tethers of their parents horses; or a girls' group will always be found collecting shellfish together. For girls, such groups offer a certain amount of protection against advances made by males, especially as puberty approaches and sexual maturation makes a girl more physically attractive. It is difficult to detach a girl from such a group, even if she is willing, for it is practically impossible to ensure that other members of the group will not carry the story home to spread it through the village.

Children's groups do not operate independently of adult authority. On the contrary, they are quite subject to it, and, as has been noted above, often function in direct response to adult commands. The /25/ time spent in such groups is not great, except on Sundays or during the school year, when the groups function during the school day. As the boys grow older, however, more time is spent in the company of the group during the early evening.

Thus, informal groups of children of the same sex and approximately similar ages form during childhood, serving both recreational and economic purposes and offering a beginning for associations that will last throughout life.

Puberty

By the onset of puberty both boys and girls have acquired a large amount of experience and knowledge about sexual matters. For boys (and possibly for the girls) much of the actual experience is of a homosexual or play nature. Some instruction comes from grandparents, who stand in a joking relationship to the children. This appears to be most extensive in the case 86A [603]